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April 26, 2000

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Re: U.S. Patent Application
Applicant: Masahiko SATO
Our Ref.: 450100-02464

Dear Sir:

Enclosed are papers constituting the above patent application which is being filed under 37 C.F.R. 1.53 without a signed Declaration. Please accord a filing date and a serial number to such application and inform the undersigned thereof so that a signed Declaration and the surcharge required by 37 C.F.R. 1.16(e) may be duly filed.

Please address all correspondence to:

William S. Frommer, Esq.
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Respectfully,



William S. Frommer
Reg. No. 25,506
Attorney for Applicant
Enclosures

Patent Application Transmittal

(only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 C.F.R. 1.53(b))

Correspondence Address:
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Date: April 26, 2000
Attorney Docket No.: 450100-02464

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
Box Patent Application
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

With reference to the filing in the United States Patent and Trademark Office of an application for patent in the name(s) of:

Masahiko SATO

entitled:

BROADCAST PROGRAM RECORDING APPARATUS USING ELECTRONIC PROGRAM GUIDE

The following are enclosed:

Specification (10 pages)
 5 Sheet(s) of Drawings
 3 Claim(s) (including 1 independent claim(s))
 This application contains a multiple dependent claim

Our check for \$ 690.00, calculated on the basis of the claims as amended by any enclosed preliminary amendment as follows:

Basic Fee, \$690.00 (\$345.00)	.....	\$ 690.00
Number of Claims in excess of 20 at \$18.00 (\$9.00) each:	.....	-0-
Number of Independent Claims in excess of 3 at \$78.00 (\$39.00) each:	.....	-0-
Multiple Dependent Claim Fee at \$260.00 (\$130.00)	.....	-0-
Total Filing Fee	.....	\$ 690.00
Assignment Recording Fee \$40.00	.....	-0-

Oath or Declaration and Power of Attorney
 New signed unsigned
 Copy from a prior application (37 C.F.R. 1.63(d))

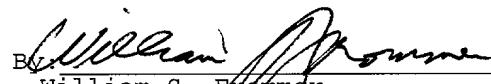
Certified copy of each of the following application(s) to substantiate the claim(s) for priority made in the Declaration:

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Filed</u>	<u>In</u>
11-121808	28 April 1999	Japan

Please charge any additional fees required for the filing of this application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,

FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
Attorneys for Applicant


William S. Frommer
Reg. No. 28,506

PATENT
450100-02464

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION FOR LETTERS PATENT

TITLE: BROADCAST PROGRAM RECORDING APPARATUS
USING ELECTRONIC PROGRAM GUIDE

INVENTOR: Masahiko SATO

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BROADCAST PROGRAM RECORDING APPARATUS USING ELECTRONIC PROGRAM GUIDE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG (Electronic Program Guide).

More particularly, the present invention relates to a broadcast program recording apparatus which is capable of detecting a time at which a broadcast program which is being recorded is changed in order to enter a new broadcast program.

2. Description of the Related Art

Conventionally, in media which provide a large number of programs, such as digital satellite broadcasts, FM multiplex broadcasts, or the Internet, an EPG has been introduced to improve the convenience of selecting a broadcast program. For example, in a digital satellite broadcast, broadcast program information which is transmitted, such as a channel number, a program name, a schedule, etc., is decoded by an EPG decoder within a receiver, and the EPG data is displayed on a television monitor (on-screen display). A selection can be made from these on-screen displayed broadcast programs, and the selected broadcast program is used to make an entry in

recording management information so as to perform recording management. A new broadcast program to be entered into this recording management information can be entered and stored by giving instructions using a remote control unit, etc.

However, as described in the conventional art, there is a problem in that entering a new broadcast program into recording management information can be performed only when recording starts. For example, even if attempts are made to enter a new broadcast program while recording is being performed, the new broadcast program cannot be entered into the recording management information and retrieval at later time cannot be performed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly, an object of the present invention is to provide a broadcast program recording apparatus in which entering a new broadcast program into recording management information can be performed even if a broadcast program is being recorded.

To achieve the above-mentioned object, according to the present invention, there is provided a broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG, comprising: a tuner section for receiving a broadcast program containing broadcast program information; an EPG decoder section for decoding the broadcast program information received by the

tuner section; a controller having recording management information which is created by extracting a broadcast program to be recorded from the decoded EPG data; and a recording section for recording the broadcast program on the basis of the recording management information, wherein the controller compares the current time with a broadcast program start time contained in the EPG data, and enters a new broadcast program into the recording management information when a broadcast program which is being recorded is to be changed or immediately after it is changed.

The EPG decoder can accept broadcast program information directly from the outside, and the current time is produced from time information input from the outside.

In the manner as described above, as a result of being able to enter a new broadcast program when a broadcast program is to be changed, it is possible to enter the new broadcast program without a user having to perform a special operation, thereby improving the ease of operation.

The above and further objects, aspects and novel features of the invention will become more apparent from the following detailed description when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a block diagram of a broadcast program

recording apparatus using an EPG according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a flowchart showing a part of the operation of a controller which is a constituent of the recording apparatus;

Fig. 3 is a block diagram of a broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 4 is a block diagram of a broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to a third embodiment of the present invention; and

Fig. 5 is a block diagram of a broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Various embodiments of a broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to the present invention are described below with reference to the accompanying drawings.

As shown in Fig. 1, a broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to a first embodiment comprises a tuner section 11 for receiving a broadcast program containing broadcast program information, an EPG decoder section 12 for decoding broadcast program

information in the broadcast program received by the tuner section 11, an internal clock section 13 for outputting the current time, a controller 14 having recording management information produced by extracting a broadcast program to be recorded from the decoded EPG data, and a recording section 15 for performing recording, such as video recording of a broadcast program, on the basis of the recording management information.

In such a construction, the EPG decoder section 12 decodes the broadcast program information in order to create EPG data. This EPG data broadly comprises the current time, a receiving channel, a broadcasting station name, a broadcasting time, and a program title of the broadcast program which is being broadcast at this broadcasting time. Also, this EPG data may be text data which has been edited so as to have a correlation between the broadcasting time and the program title.

As shown in Fig. 2, initially, the controller 14 causes EPG data to be displayed on screen when a recording operation ("06:00 ABCD" in the embodiment) is being performed. Then, the controller 14 specifies a desired broadcasting time and a desired program title ("07:00 EFGH" in the embodiment) (step ST11).

In this state, a broadcast program start time ("07:00" in the embodiment) to be compared is extracted from the

broadcast program information of the EPG and is compared with the current time (step ST12). It is assumed that the comparison produces a match when the broadcast program start time coincides with the current time or when it is immediately after the broadcasting time. If they coincide with each other, the broadcast program is entered as a new broadcast program into the recording management information ("07:00 EFGH" in the embodiment) (step ST13).

The program entered into this recording management information is automatically recorded. As a result of the above, when a desired broadcast program is extracted automatically from among a large number of broadcast programs and is reserved, the reserved broadcast program is entered automatically into the recording management information, and can be recorded automatically. In this manner, it is not necessary to perform a new recording operation which is performed after a predetermined broadcast program is entered. Therefore, ease of operation for selecting a broadcast program can be improved.

A broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to a second embodiment aims to receive broadcast program information from the outside, for example, from the Internet, as shown in Fig. 3. The broadcast program recording apparatus of this embodiment comprises a tuner section 11a for receiving a broadcast program, an EPG

decoder section 12a for directly receiving and decoding the broadcast program information by using the Internet, etc., an internal clock section 13 for outputting the current time, a controller 14 having recording management information which is created by extracting a broadcast program to be recorded from the decoded EPG data, and a recording section 15 for performing a recording, such as video recording of a broadcast program, on the basis of the recording management information.

In such a construction, the EPG decoder section 12a receives broadcast program information directly via the Internet, etc., and decodes it to produce EPG data. Then, in a manner similar to that described in the first embodiment, the broadcast start time of the EPG data is compared with the current time. If the broadcast program start time coincides with the current time or is immediately after it, the comparison produces a match, and a new broadcast program which is reserved is entered into the recording management information.

A broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to a third embodiment, as shown in Fig. 4, aims to receive EPG data from the Internet, etc., and also to receive current time information from the outside. The broadcast program recording apparatus of this embodiment comprises a tuner section 11a for receiving a broadcast

program, an EPG decoder section 12a for receiving and decoding broadcast program information from the Internet, etc., a controller 14a having recording management information which is produced by extracting a broadcast program to be recorded from the decoded EPG data, and a recording section 15 for recording a broadcast program on the basis of the recording management information.

In such a construction, the EPG decoder section 12a decodes the broadcast program information obtained from the Internet, etc., in order to produce EPG data. Then, in a manner similar to that described in the first embodiment, the broadcast program start time of the EPG data is compared with the internal current time obtained from the outside. If the broadcast program start time coincides with the internal current time or is immediately after it, it is assumed that the comparison produces a match, and a new broadcast program which is reserved is entered into the recording management information.

A broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to a fourth embodiment, as shown in Fig. 5, is constructed in such a way that an external tuner for receiving a broadcast program containing broadcast program information and a recording apparatus for performing a recording are separated from each other. That is, the external tuner section comprises a tuner section 11b for

receiving a broadcast program containing broadcast program information, and an EPG decoder section 12 for decoding the broadcast program information received by the tuner section 11b. The recording apparatus comprises a controller 14b having recording management information which is produced by extracting a broadcast program to be recorded from the EPG data produced by the EPG decoder section 12, an internal clock section 13 for outputting the internal current time, and a recording apparatus 15 for performing a recording, such as video recording of a broadcast program, on the basis of the recording management information.

In such a construction, in a manner similar to that described in the first embodiment, the broadcast program start time of the EPG data is compared with the internal current time. If the broadcast program start time coincides with the internal current time or is immediately after it, it is assumed that the comparison produces a match, and a new broadcast program which is reserved is entered into the recording management information.

As has thus been described, in the broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to the present invention, by comparing a broadcast program start time with the current time, a new broadcast program can be entered into recording management information when the broadcast program is to be changed or immediately after it is changed.

Thus, there is an advantage in that a new broadcast program can be entered even if recording is being performed, thereby improving the ease of a recording operation by a user.

Many different embodiments of the present invention may be constructed without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. It should be understood that the present invention is not limited to the specific embodiments described in this specification. To the contrary, the present invention is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the invention as hereafter claimed. The scope of the following claims is to be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications, equivalent structures and functions.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG comprising:

a tuner section for receiving a broadcast program containing broadcast program information;

an EPG decoder section for decoding the broadcast program information received by the tuner section;

a controller having recording management information which is created by extracting a broadcast program to be recorded from the decoded EPG data; and

a recording section for recording the broadcast program on the basis of said recording management information,

wherein said controller compares the current time with a broadcast program start time contained in said EPG data, and enters a new broadcast program into said recording management information when a broadcast program which is being recorded is to be changed or immediately after it is changed.

2. A broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to claim 1, wherein said EPG decoder can directly receive broadcast program information from the outside.

3. A broadcast program recording apparatus using an EPG according to claim 1, wherein said current time is produced by time information received from the outside.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A broadcast program recording apparatus is provided in which ease of operation is improved for selecting a broadcast program to be entered by making it possible to enter a broadcast program to be recorded, by using EPG data, even when a broadcast program which is being currently broadcast is being recorded. The broadcast program recording apparatus includes a tuner section for receiving a broadcast program containing broadcast program information, an EPG decoder for decoding the broadcast program information received by the tuner section, a controller having recording management information which is created by extracting a broadcast program to be recorded from the decoded EPG data, and a recording section for recording the broadcast program on the basis of the recording management information. The controller compares the current time with a broadcast program start time contained in the EPG data, and enters a new broadcast program into the recording management information when the current broadcast program is to be changed or immediately after it is changed.

FIG. 1

PROGRAM RECORDING APPARATUS

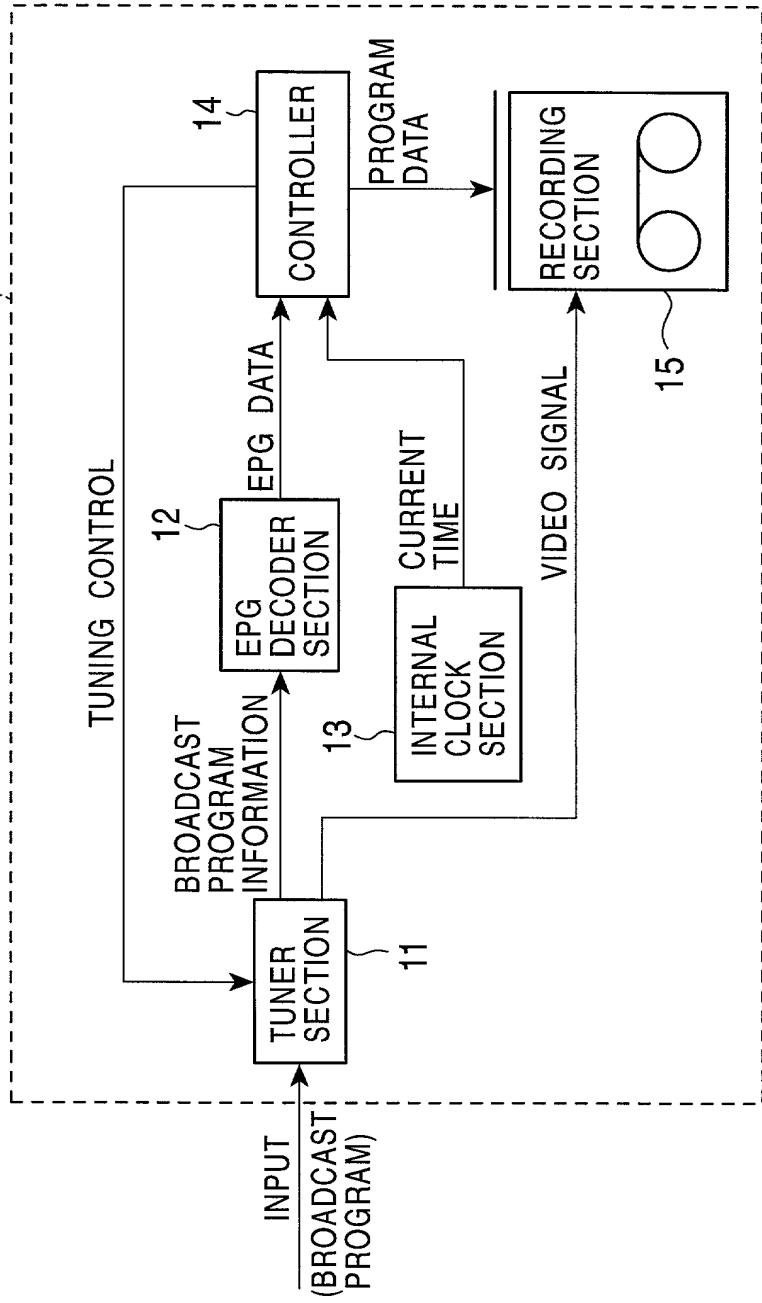


FIG. 2

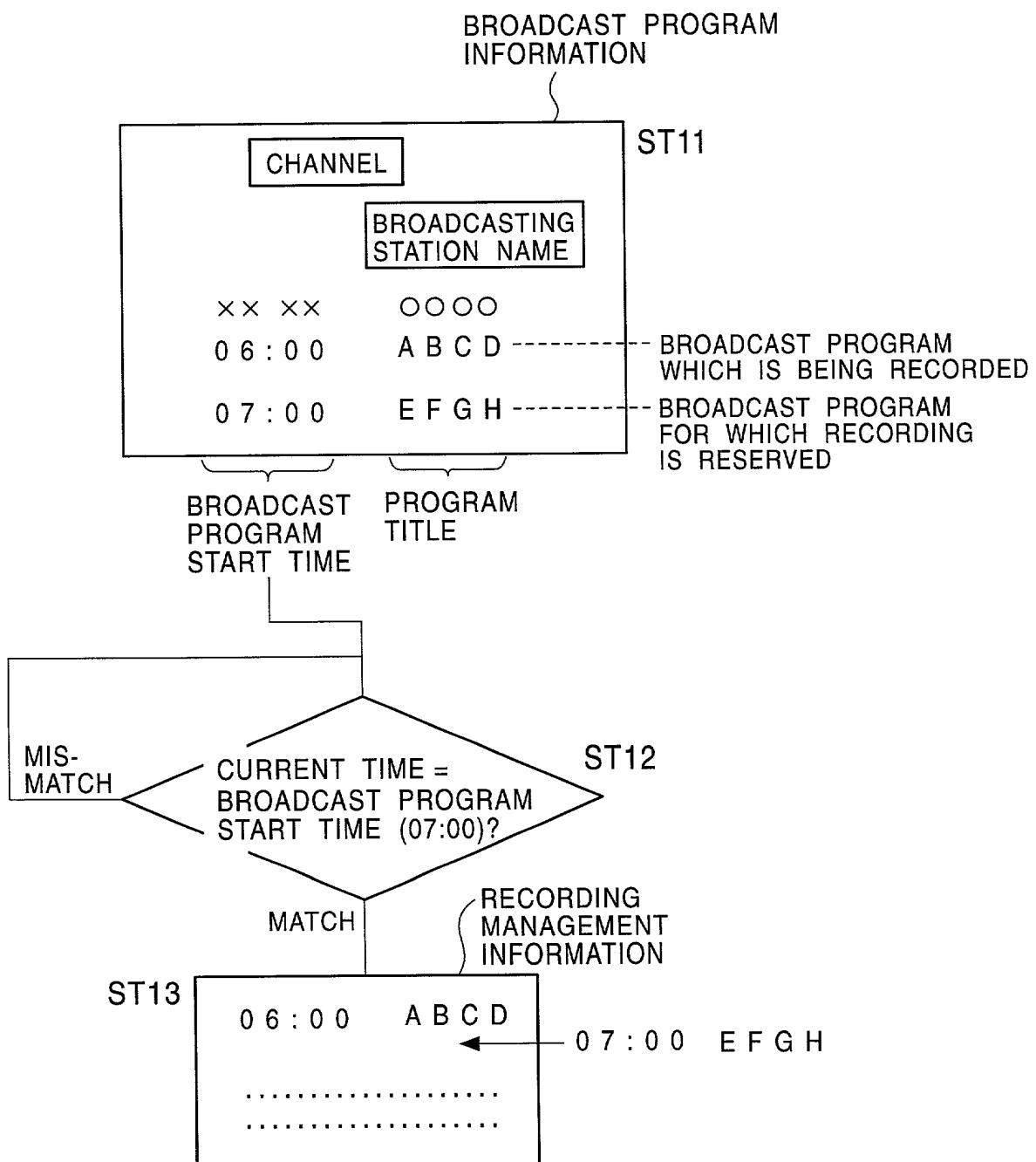


FIG. 3

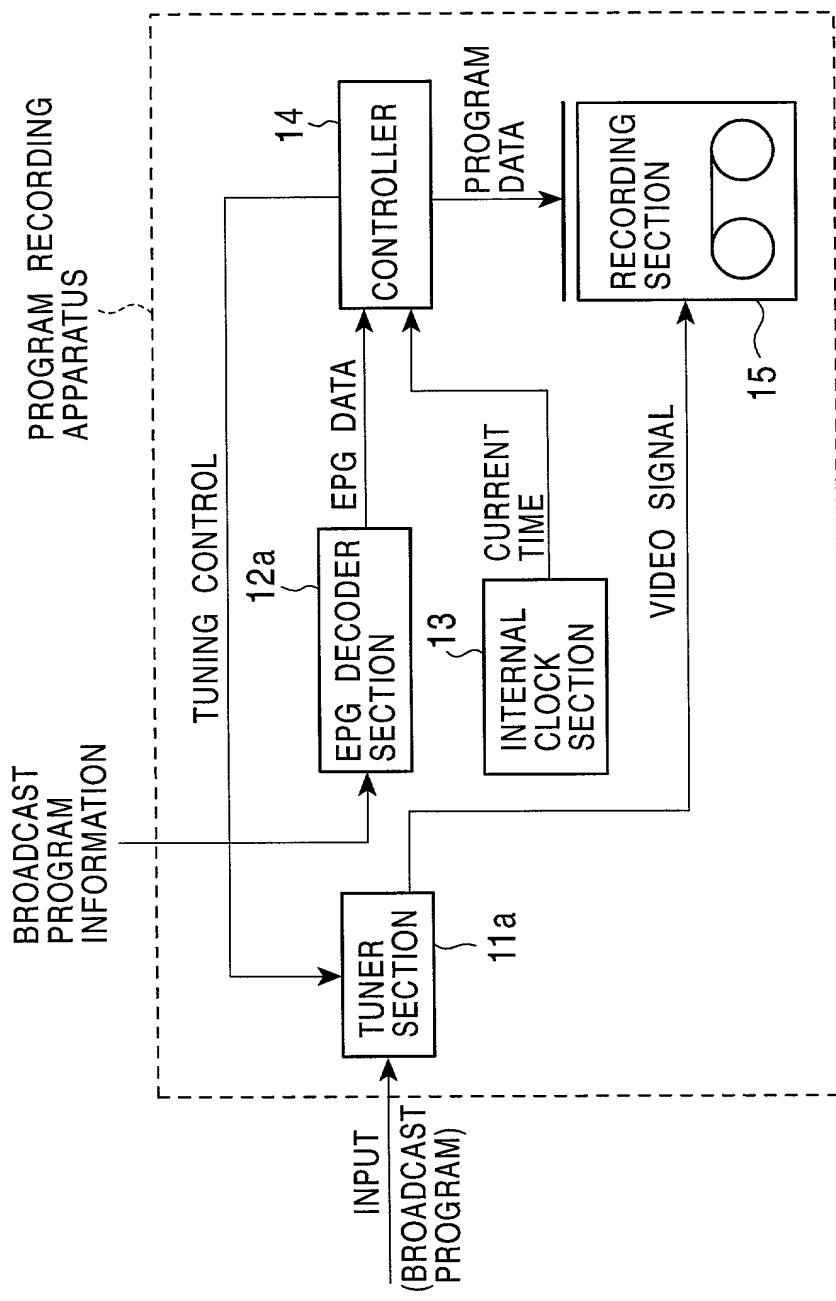


FIG. 4

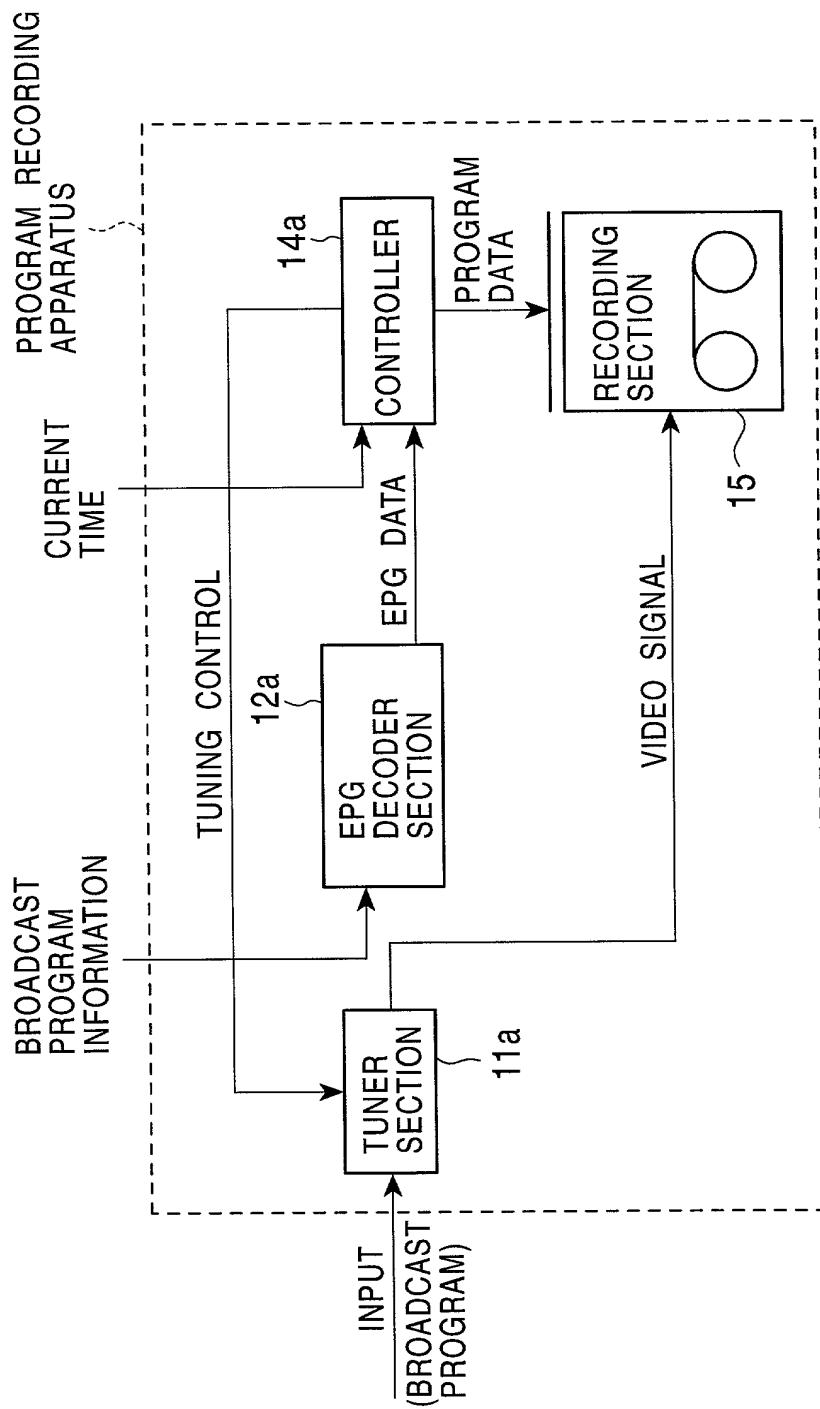
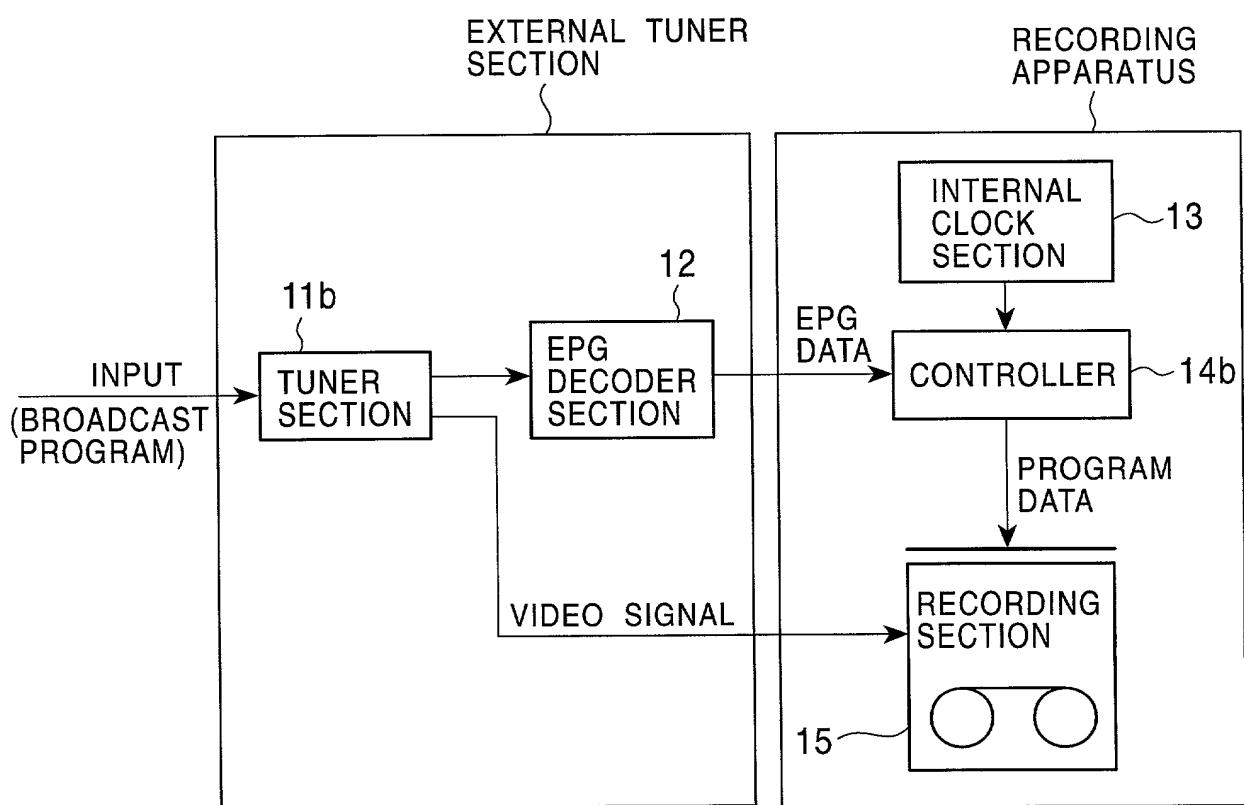


FIG. 5



DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION (JOINT OR SOLE)

(Under 37 CFR § 1.63; with Power of Attorney)

FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP

FLH File No. 450100-02464

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention ENTITLED:

BROADCAST PROGRAM RECORDING APPARATUS USING ELECTRONIC PROGRAM GUIDE

the specification of which

is attached hereto.

was filed on _____ as Application Serial No. _____,

with amendment(s) through _____ (if applicable, give dates).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Sec. 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s) [list additional applications on separate page]: Priority Claimed:

Number:	Country:	Filed (Day/Month/Year):	Yes	No
11-121808	Japan	28 April 1999	X	

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Sec. 1.56, which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

Prior U.S. Application(s) [list additional applications on separate page]:

Appln. Ser. Number:	Filed (Day/Month/Year):	Status (patented, pending, abandoned):
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I hereby appoint WILLIAM S. FROMMER, Registration No. 25,506, and DENNIS M. SMID, Registration No. 34,930 or their duly appointed associate, my attorneys, with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application, to make alterations and amendments therein, to file continuation and divisional applications thereof, to receive the Patent, and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office and in the Courts in connection therewith, and specify that all communications about the application are to be directed to the following correspondence address:

WILLIAM S. FROMMER, Esq.
c/o FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
745 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10151

Direct all telephone calls to:
(212) 588-0800
to the attention of:
WILLIAM S. FROMMER

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

INVENTOR(S):

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full name of sole or first inventor: Masahiko SATO
Residence: Tokyo, Japan
Citizenship: Japan

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full name of 2nd joint inventor (if any):
Residence:
Citizenship:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full name of 3rd joint inventor (if any):
Residence:
Citizenship:

[Similarly list additional inventors on separate page]

Post Office Address(es) of inventor(s):
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Sony Corporation
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Note: In order to qualify for reduced fees available to Small Entities, each inventor and any other individual or entity having rights to the invention must also sign an appropriate separate "Verified Statement (Declaration) Claiming for Supporting a Claim by Another for Small Entity Status" form [e.g. for Independent Inventor, Small Business Concern, Nonprofit Organization, individual Non-Inventor].

Note: A post office address must be provided for each inventor.